

Identifying and assigning WIC Codes	Finding ways to affirm clients	Bridging conversations from other topics to nutrition
Finding referrals to meet people's needs	Introducing tools in a way that gets good responses	Connecting participant interests to behavior change ideas
Helping participants explore concerns related to nutrition	Getting participants talking	Documenting TGIF notes
	Using silence to allow participants time to respond to open ended questions	

What's in the cards for you?

The future will always hold mysteries! It brings unknown challenges and rewards to our lives. But isn't it true that choices we make today can make tomorrow better? As we grow wiser with experience, we often learn that what we do today can prepare us for what happens tomorrow.



We want to discover the topics that will help WIC families improve their daily lives and make tomorrow brighter. But what about ourselves?

What are WE doing to today to have better conversations with participants and improve our Nutrition Assessment skills? Are we willing to “walk the walk” for ourselves?

Let's try the card sort!

“Every WIC counselor faces challenges, right? These cards contain challenges WIC counselors share with us every day. Please sort them into three piles – everyday challenges, sometimes challenges, and not a challenge – so we can see what challenges are most important to you.”

1. Let's start with the “no problem” pile and celebrate your successes. Remember your strengths! Some things come easily.
2. Every WIC Counselor is different. Which of the cards in your “everyday” challenge pile is your greatest challenge?

- What will you have to do to “retire” that card to the “no problem” pile?

What you practice today will be what you do better tomorrow!

- Will reviewing WIC Codes help you to identify and assign them more easily?
- Will talking to other counselors to get tips and ideas on how to keep conversations on track?
- Will reviewing nutrition education ideas and referrals prepare you to handle topics that come up in conversations more easily?

Whatever your concern, we know the cards hold keys to making your future a more successful, more enjoyable experience. Improving our skills helps us increase the fortunes of Arizona families. Our practice today is a brighter future for WIC.



“License to Drive”



Go back in time with us a few years. Maybe it was more than a few years ago! We're assuming that you were once 16 and a new driver. Like many enthusiastic drivers, you may have started to enjoy getting to your destination quickly – whether or not speedometer agreed with the speed limit!

More than a few careless drivers have suffered unnecessary expense or injury by getting too focused on the finish line.

What about WIC? Think about the time we spend with participants. Between the time they arrive and the time they leave with checks, we follow the roads that take us through Nutrition Assessment. There are a number of turns we can take to find the resources and recommendations that help our families most. What are some tips that help us to better navigate ABCDE and make sure we cross the finish line without leaving behavior change and healthy choices behind?



Detours

Have you ever started a conversation that exited Nutrition and Health Blvd. and took you down Other Issues Avenue? Happens all the time at WIC! There's not a problem if we know how to steer the conversation back to our scope of practice. We can use a phrase to change lanes and

find the entrance ramp back. We can acknowledge mom and take a U-turn. “That’s interesting.” “Wow you’re busy.” “I understand.” Then we can redirect the conversation. “Let’s talk about what we can do to help (you/your child) to (improve/change/grow/eat) better. What changes do feel like you could make today (or this week) to get closer to where you want to be?” Think about different ways to redirect conversations that you have seen get off track.



Stop!

Have you ever been on cruise control and blazed right past something important? It’s especially easy when conversations are moving along and going well. Don’t forget to stop and glance at ABCDE topics before you end the conversation. Make sure you didn’t leave out a question that might uncover something you need to know. “Oh, if you don’t mind, I didn’t think to ask about formula preparation. If I was babysitting for you, tell me how to prepare bottles so I do things the way that you would for Marisela.”

We might find something important to share, or there may be something we need to document that we didn’t stop to ask.



Yield

Sometimes we’re in a hurry and we feel the pressure of appointment schedules. Are we listening to the feelings and interests of participants? If we take a moment to remind parents about the ways healthy choices keep them on the path to long-term goals for their children, we increase the chance they’ll talk openly about what next steps they’re willing to take.



Watch for potholes!

Distracted drivers sometimes regret their inattention when “Bam!” they lose a tire or worse. As a WIC Counselor, your attention to the conversation helps you discover health concerns and WIC Codes. Sometimes they’re (squirrel!) easy to miss when (shoe sale!) we let our (dinner tonight?) minds wander. Stopping a second to look over ABCDE helps us collect information we need to document codes and offer recommendations that help participants.



Under Construction

All WIC participants are under construction. Pregnant moms are building babies, infants and children are constantly remodeling. Our WIC families always have major projects underway. Our TGIF notes are the guides to help us know what phase of behavior change our clients are working on, and how to pick up where we left off. Think about important information that isn't in the blank Nutrition Questionnaire anymore! It needs to be in your note. Pregnancy history/outcomes. Formula ounces/day. Number of times nursing. WIC Codes assigned and why. Changes or goals families want to make (or goals still in progress). Special food packages. Special formulas issued. Amounts of formula issued for IPNs. Your TGIF cheat sheets remember it all, so you don't have to. Give them a look before you're done so we do our best to keep building on the progress our WIC families are making!

Are we there yet? We're getting closer. Together We Can...make Arizona WIC stronger from the inside. We support each other because we all need refreshment and encouragement. Hope you've enjoyed the rest stop today. Buckle up and drive safe!

"Have a Chocolate"



We have all heard the Forrest Gump quote "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get"? In WIC you are face to face with all kinds of families and all kinds of responses, it is so true after presenting a tool in your session you never know what you are going to get.

You hear about the joys of new parents, the struggles of childhood, and the heartbreaks of family



life. You listen, affirm, ask, probe, offer and inspire. You provide the best support and encouragement you can, and especially the gift of being fully present.

Who understands what you do? Do you ever feel alone, balancing your responsibility to serve others and manage the rest of your life? It's not easy!

Sometimes we need to share our stories and help each other sort through our busy life at WIC. We've listened to others and we need a turn to be heard.

Oops, I mean heard.



Well, we know exactly what you mean. That's why we've made you part of a fantastic group of people who walk in your shoes and know life is like at WIC! We wouldn't want to miss the chance to make a difference for growing families in Arizona. Let's make sure we take the opportunity to keep each other strong. TogetherWeCan is a group that offers refreshment to others, and we're here to find refreshment by sharing.

Do you have any tips or tricks that help you keep up in a busy clinic? Please share the heartwarming moments of your week or the problems you solved. Learned any new tricks that help you Get to the Heart of the Matter? Send us your stories, questions, or comments.

